

The Washington Herald

PLAYS AND PLAYERS OF THE EARLY FEBRUARY STAGE :.

Has The Griffith Of Biograph Days Really Returned?

"Way Down East" Shows Many Glimpses of Style that Made Screen Genius Famous.

By EARLE DORSEY.

THERE is something always hilariously funny in the spectacle offered by the usually sane analyst of the drama the moment he undertakes a critical discussion of some major product of the D. W. Griffith camera.

Given, as a rule, to the orderly assembly and calm restraint of his adjectives, your average critic will, nine times out of ten, toss his circumspection to the winds, blush with an incoherent, school-girlish hysteria and give himself over to a semi-maudlin delirium of superlatives which rise, months afterward, to hiss gleefully at his embarrassed memory.

Personally speaking, I have never yet won a battle against the suffocating dynamics of Griffith's style and I'm not alone by a long shot. It makes little difference how contemptuous or low-spirited toward the current dramatic scene your critic habitually may be, set him in front of a Griffith screen and instantly he lets out a wild, hoydenish whoop, glorying in his own seduction and praising Heaven, as a rule, for no greater weakness.

Generally speaking, there may be less raving over

Griffith's "Way Down East" than is customary. Part of this may be due to the fact that Griffith's "Way Down East" comedy is sufficiently Sennett-like in spots to restore one's faculties and one's orientation; but it is more than likely due chiefly to the fact that tional artillery, just as it gets used to being in love or paying income tax.

In some quarters, Griffith has unconsciously started dissenting cult whose chief doctrine is to find fault with what he does. There's some reason in that apparent madness. A man who can intelligently find fault with Griffith's work within two days of seeing it is a superior person indeed and the very act of putting up a struggle against the Griffith hypnosis denotes a superior quality of mind.

I make no doubt that legions of new disciples of this cult will pick "Way Down East" full of holes in course of time, but I prefer to rave on through the years, calling him the greatest of them all and blithely ignoring the smart alecks who are finding a 50-cent picture that has Griffith

Generally speaking, that universal tendency of Griffith spectators and analysts to approach-yea, to the semi-maudlin in their praise, is an invariable concomitant of Griffith's completed work and it is one, at least of the ineradicable indications of the heights of the eighth art this man has scaled

"Way Down Eeast," notwithstaufling certain shortcomings, develops the usual emotional symptoms in comings, develops the usual emotional symptoms in the spectator. The same old Griffith hypnosis is greased and working in the Lottie Blair Parker adaptation. It's not the comether of Belasco, with his genius for minutiae; it's not all due to sweeping climax development, nor yet to subtle characterization; it's that odd, unduplicated and intangible something that occasionally is defined as "perspective" or "stereoscopic quality"—a quality as distinctly a part of the Griffith camera style as D. W.'s nose is a part of the Griffith physiognomy.

AY Down East" is remarkable first for its object lesson in adaptation. I went into that discussion a week ago but a further reference is in order. It is hard to get rid of the idea that the evasive Griffith—a man who is not above beseeching you to try to remain awake through the second part of his picture—has practised an excessively sly and excessively practical joke on the film fraternity. This particular deak has been flooded ernity. This particular desk has been flooded more months than I care to remember with a species of information concerning the brilliant effort being made to comb the language of two hemispheres for new screen stories and while the work goes on, ith reaches out and grabs an old hick-hilster knocks everyone cross-eyed with the finished

Griffith reaches out and grabs an old hick-hister and knocks everyone cross-eyed with the finished product.

This new Griffith film must be seen for its climax development, if for no other purpose. With broad, easy natural strokes, Griffith works up his tension to a point where a climax of terrific force is not only possible but absolutely necessary to sustain the dramatic proportion of the thing. And what a climax: Greater, probably, in its concentrated intensity, than even the ride of the clansmen in "The Birth of a Nation:" greater by far than the Siegmann-Harron-Gish episode in "Hearts of the World:" vastly more intense than anything in "Intolerance," though perhaps no greater, proportionately speaking, than the Walthall-Reid-Aitken pig-pen feud in "The Battle of Elderberry Gulch"

A new one? By no means! Simply a very good old one—a Biograph two or three-reeler. But perhaps I have the title wrong. No matter. Walthall was a psaim-singing, sharp-shooting, tobacco-chewing mountaineer villain whom you loved with an intensity at the end that eclipsed the initial intensity of your hate. A story, friends; a story!

There's room for hard thinking in that reference to Biograph, but before considering it one might well say that Griffith has built up a sharper, more compact and concentrated power in the climax of "Way Down East" than in any picture of his I've seen since the Biograph era. He strung out the climax in "The Birth" over an extensive period, beginning with the ride of the clan and ending with the forcible entry of the clansmen to rescue Lillian Gish. There were practically four climaxes in "Intolerance" and in "Hearts of the World," Von Strohelm prosecuted his amorous devoirs over a comparatively lengthy period. Even in "Broken Blossoms," the Chink's sharp, satisfying revenge was held in anticipated reserve for an appreciable interval. The rescue of Lillian Gish from the grinding ice of "Way Down East." on the contrary, is unanticipated in its manner and shockingly forceful in its consummation.

BUT getting back to the Biograph idea, Griffith has given us in "Way Down East" a picture happily bereft of propaganda. Griffith attempts to twist his theme into a semblance of moral evangelizing but it never gets past the first caption and the whole thing, the start to finish is a story. There were the second of the secon

bereft of propaganda. Grimth attempts to twist his theme into a semblance of moral evangelizing but it pever gets past the first caption and the whole thing, from start to finish, is a story. There may be ground in the assertion that Griffith has not scrupled to retain the wealth of hokum in which the Parker original script abounded but it is a softened, minimized species of hokum that gracefully slips past without its number-tags showing. And how it contributes to the development of climatic interest in a thing that is sheer story.

That sheer story-telling tendency is what made Griffith's unfinished Biograph manner so delightful. He is today, a far greater story teller than he ever was but the thing that counts is the fact that he has, once again, told a story to tell a story and not to convince someone that prohibition is silly or that censorship is prudish or that the Hun is a beaut or that priestcraft has its drawbacks. He has, in "Way Down East." a tale free of the evangelist's snort and if "Way Down East" means a definite return to the Biograph manner—amplified, glorified and polished—then one is to see screen pictures and no mistake.

There is one odd thing about "Way Down East" and that is its comedy, Much of it is very near to slapstick. Somewhere along the line, the obsolete atmosphere of "Way Down East" must have overcome, temporarily, the Griffith effort at modernization, for in its comedy (as well as at certain points of the character development) the old byosh thriller grins through in all its 1810 trappings. However, one does not die hard over the comedy, for the tension puts one in need of raw comedy meat and Griffith throws it at one by chunks and hind-quarters.

Another slight disappointment that comes only as an afterthought is the definite decline from the Griffith standard of the captions. The best captioning job ever done on a Griffith picture was done in "The Birth of a Nation." There's nothing in "Way Down East" to compare to that former epic and its captions though I nearly lost equipo

(CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO.)



In the Pictures.

Olive Tell, one of the prominent members of the cast that will interpret "Cognac," the new Shubert comedy-drama, which begins a week's run at the Belasco tomorrow night, prior to its Broadway premiere - Above at

ningham, a petite pair of dancers in Victor Herbert's musical comedy hit, "The Girl in the Spot-light," which opens a Washing-ton engagement at the National tonight-Above in center.

Lillian Gish, heroine of many D. W. Griffith screen epics, who plays the leading role in Grif-fith's "Way Down East," which begins the second week of its local run at Poli's today—Above

Dorothy Jardon, headliner of the vandeville bill at B. F. Keith's this week—Below at left. Jack Fairbanks, featured in the vaudeville bill at the Cosmos this week—Below in center. Ruth Dwyer, in "The Stealers," at the Strand-Below at right.



Today's Amusements.

Poll's-"Way Down East," D. W. Griffith's film production.

National—"Girl in the Spotlight." Victor Herbert's new musical comedy.

Gnyety — "Jingle Jin Herk's musical burletts. B. F. Keith's—Vaudeville. Strand-Vaudeville, Cosmos-Vaudeville.

Metropolitan - James Curwood's "Isobel," with House Peters and Jane Novak.

Columbia—"The Inside of the
Cup," by Winston Churchill.

Palace-"May Allison in "The Marriage of William Ashe," by Mrs. Humphrey Ward. Daniels in "She Couldn't Help It," by Miriam Mi-

Garden-Mahlon Hamilton and Betty Blythe in "The Truant Knickerbocker-"Isobel," with

House Peters and Jane Novak. Crandall's-Dorothy Phillips in "Once to Every Woman. Criterion-"The Sage Hen." Empress-"Up in Mary's Attic."

Edith Was a Girl of 14 Before She Saw a Theater

Now She'd Rather Be Known as an Actress Than a Mere Artist's Model.

listinguished, artists and painters; but a model, after all, is only a lay figure, and apart from physical attractiveness it doesn't require a

great deal of talent.
"My ambitions are all in the other direction. I am anxious to succeed on the stage and it's a bit disconcerting to have people pop up (when you think they have noticed certing to have people pop up (when you think they have noticed something particularly good you did do!" through no other channel of life than the cinema screen.

We have heard much about the painting of something or other. As fainting of something or other. As in the theaters of the world. But have remarked before, I have no objection to being pointed out as a model, but I'd much prefer to be known as an actress."

Richard Barthelmess has won the title of "the worlds greatest love with the tendent screen."

We have heard much about the matine idol." He has been legion in the theaters of the world. But he was circumscribed by the conventions of the theater and its limitations until the screen of silver model, but I'd much prefer to be known as an actress." known as an actress.

future was concerned. She decided for the stage immediately and when she was old enough, took a train ne visit settled her as far as her

MacManus to Talk.

The "Evening of Irish Stories" which is to be given by Seamus MacManus next Saturday, at the New Willard, promises to be a really unusual "treat" for all story-tellers. Mr. MacManus will devote the evening to Irish stories meet of the stories meet of the wildest adulation.

Miss Edith King, who is appear- to New York. From the station she Miss Edith King, who is appearing in "Cognac" at the Belasco tomorrow night, is fortunate enough
to be well known in two fields of
endeavor: in the studios of famous
artists and on the stage. Miss King
was the model for Howard Chandler Christy's masterpiece, "Water
Lilles," and for his illustrations of
David Graham Phillip's "The Story
of Susan Lennox," and Jack London's "The Little Lady of the Big
House."
"But it is annowing" says Miss

to New York, 'From the station she
ordered a taxi to take her to the
ordered a taxi to take her to take her to the
ordered a taxi to take her to take her to the
ordered a taxi to take her to tak "But it is annoying," says Miss King, "when one is known only as a model. It is pleasant enough, of course, to be sought as a model by "Cognac") in "Bab". season she was with Helen Hayes and Tom Powers (now also in "Cognac") in "Bab."

1,000 Letters a Day a Fair "Mash" Mail For Griffith Star

Richard Barthelmess has won the

Miss King was born in White Haven, Pa., and was never inside a theater until she was 14. That one visit sattled her so 14.

Up at the great Griffith studios on Flagler Island, off Orienta Point, at Mamaroneck, L. I., there comes to the postoffice a sack of mail daily

These missives contain invariably phrases of the wildest adulation, while the proposals for "his heart and hand" are countless. Praise for Mr. MacManus will devote the evening to Irish stories, most of them original, taken from some of the many lovely books which he has written, among them "The Lad o' the Friels," "Donegal Fairy Stories," "In Chimney Corners" and "The Red Poacher."

Kreisler in Recital.

Fritz Kreisler, the great violinist, will be heard in recital for the second time this season, at the National Theater, Thursday, February 17 at 4:30 o'clock, under the management of Mrs. Wilson-Greens.

Next Week's Shows

GARRICK—Doris Keane in "Romance," the Edward Sheldon drama of a great love, supported by Basil Sydney and A. E. Anson.

NATIONAL—Charles Dillingham's popular operetta, "Apple Blossoms," with John Charles Thomas, Wilda Bennett, Percival Knight, Fred and Adele Astaire, Edgar Norton, Ruth Lee, Edna Temple, Marie Berne, Maurico Darcy, Frank Snyder, Thomas Fitspatrick, Breens Dilston, Dorothy Haighton and a cherus of distinction.

BELASCO—Guy Bates Post in "The Masquerader," by John Hunter Booth, founded on Katherine Cecil Thurston's nevel of the same name.

COSMOS—Twelfth anniversary week;
"Clothes, Clothes, Clothes!" featuring
Raymond Loftus; La Berenicis; Lutes
Brethers, armless wonders; "Adrian;"
Ryan and Moore; Oliver and Lee; Wal-lace Reid in "The Charm Schoel;"
"You'll Be Surprised," and other fea-tures.

B. F. KEITH'S-Vaudeville.

STRAND.—W. B. Friedlander's "Sweet-ies;" the Pesci Duo: Johnny Murphy and Beb Piant in Neal O'Hara's "Se-crets;" Joe Weston and Grace Eline; the Deach Wallin Trio: Will Rogers in: "Water, Water, Everywhere," and other acts.

GAYETY—Al Roeves' "Joy Belles,"
with Harry (Heine) Cooper, "Snitz"
Moore, Lew Christy, Millie Valeska,
Elsie Huber and Pauline Harris.

PALACE—Billie Burke in "The Educa-tion of Elirabeth," her latest Para-meunt starring production.

COLUMBIA— Forbidden Fruit, Cecil
B. DeMille's special production, based
on 'he story by Jeanie MarPherson
and featuring Agnes Ayres, Theodore
Roberts, Kathlyn Williams, Forrest
Stanley and many others.

METROPOLITAN-Charles Chaplin

KNICKERROCKER—Sunday and Monday, Charles Chaplin in "The Kid;" Tuesday and Wodnesday, Basall King's "Earthbound:" Thursday and Friday, Dorothy Phillips in "Once to Every Woman," Saturday, Maurice Tourneur's "The Last of the Mohicans."

CRANDALL'S.—First three days, Irvin S. Cobb's "The Life of the Party," starring Roscoe (Fatty) Arbuckle; be-ginning Wednesday, Wesley Barry in Marshall Nellan's "Dinty."

Cleveland Orchestra.

The Cleveland Orchestra will give its first Washington concert at the National Theater on Tuesday after-noon. Its conductor is Nikolal So-koloff. Mishel Piastro, violinist, will be the soloist.

week at the Arcade are an exciting

Otis Skinner to Appear In New Drama by Ibanez

Famous Dramatic Star Will Continue for Season in Present Play.

days ago, by a chance Interview with Mr. Skinner to play a Spaniard.
Mr. Skinner in Detroit, where he was appearing in "At the Villa Rose"
Rose." "Blood and Sard." it will be this season, and be seen in New York some time next year in the nounced for Lionel Barrymore. Ed-

Herbert to Conduct National Orchestra At Opening Tonight

symphony orchestra for the opening performance tonight and tomorrow night, of his latest and gayest musical sensation, "The Girl in
the Spotlight," which is to be presented at the New National by
George W. Lederer, with the original cast and production intact—
just as it was seen during the past
summer at the Knickerbocker Thetier New York City.

Than to view a musical comedy
which Mr. Harris and Irving Berlin
are thinking of acquiring. He will
also penetrate Italy to witness a
min entitled "The World Upside
Down," and will arrange for its
american showing if it is all that
its sponsors claim for it.

Cortot to Be Heard.

uter, New York City.

While "The Girl in the Spotlight" is one of the funniest pieces of its kind, employing as it does three leading comedians, whereas most shows are satisfied with one, it nevertheless possesses class and distinction, and Mr. Herbert's score

none of the young ladies rank as chorus girls, they are termed by him sub-principals. Hal Skelly, Paul Burns and Jim-

Cleveland Orchestra will give
at Washington concert at the
al Theater on Tuesday afterIts conductor is Nikolai SoMishel Piastro, violinist,
the soloist.

At the Arcade.

"features" announced for this
at the Arcade are an exciting
ty Spot' dance on Tuesday,
tof those quaint, old time
Jones" dances on Thursday,
Kiddies' Night" on Friday.

Hal Skelly, Paul Burns and Jim
mie Dunn are the three leading
Sir Philip Gibbs, the English authe now list Washington during
speak at Poli's Theater Tuesday
afternoon at 4 o'clock on "What
America Means to the World." Sir
Philip is second American tour and will
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Philip is said to be not only one of
the best informed authorities on the
European situation, but his recent
writings on American afternoon at 4 o'clock on "What
America Means to the World." Sir
Philip is second American tour and
withor, will visit Washington during
the or the new speak at Poli's Theater Tuesday
afternoon at 4 o'clock on "What
America Means to the World." Sir
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the order of the States and the

Otis Skinner, it is said, will play stead of Mr. Williams, will be the Ibanez's gladiator when the drama-tized "Blood and Sand" reaches the stage. This fact was revealed a few things, leaving the way open for

ward Sheldon was supposed to have been dramatizing the story, and John D. Williams was to have made the production.

But those plans are all changed. Selwyn for foreign parts. The new booking, has written the play, and Cushing, has written the play, and the Charles Frohman Company. Insiderable potential importance, since he travels as the representative of all three of those firms. Although it has been understood to be an alliance for booking purposes only it is possible that some joint pro-ductions will emerge as a result, and these are quite likely to be im-By special arrangement, Victor Herbert will conduct the augmented symphony orchestra for the open way to view a musical comedy which Mr. Harris and Irving Berlin thinking of acquiring. He will

Alfred Cortot, the distinguished French planist, will be the artist at the seventh concert of the Ten Star series under the management of T. Arthur Smith at the New Nashows are satisfied with one, it nevertheless possesses class and distinction, and Mr. Herbert's score is said to be the most tuneful and popular since his well-remembered "Mile. Modiste."

A brigade of feminine loveliness is promised, but Mr. Lederer wishes it to be distinctly understood that none of the young ladles rank as bussy); Bourree, for left hand alone, and Etude en Forme de Valse (Saint-Saens).

Gibbs to Lecture.

Comedy in Saddle Among New Plays Of Current Week

"Cognac" at Belasco Awaits Broadway Verdict-Victor Herbert Hit Appears.

Although the exigencies of booking arrangements have resulted, apparently, in the temporary elimination of the Garrick from the list of open playhouses, the three other legitimate theaters of the city offer an array of attractions that should meet with general approval.

"Cognac," a new Shubert comedy-drama, opens a week's run at the Belasco tomorrow night with a cast of sizeable and talented proportions, while at the National, the week will be devoted to an exposition of the charms of Victor Herbert's musical comedy success. "The Girl in the Spotlight." D. W. Griffith's "Way Down East," whiclf had an attractive opening at Poli's last Monday night, will continue at that theater for another week at least.

Vaudeville bills of charm and novelty are announced at B. F. Keith's, the Cosmos and the Strand, while the Gayety announces something a little different in the burlesque line-"Jingle, Jingle"-which opens a week's run this afternoon.

"Cognac"—Belasco.

The Messrs. Shubert will present "Cognac." a comedy-drama in three acts, at the Shubert-Belasco Theater tomorrow night. This company has been especially organized for Broadway where it will be seen following its engagement in this city. It includes Olive Tell. Tom Powers, Edith King. James Sceley, Sylvia Field, Leonard Doyle, Marie Day, Cyrus Wood, Harry Hamalainen and Harry Humphrey. "Cognac" is in three acts, time the present, the locale small village in Vermont. Tom Powers imperson ates Elmer Stubbs, a doughboy, who has just returned doughboy who has also returned from the front, disovers in Marcelle none other than "Cognac," a famous French cocotte whom he had met at Bordeaux. This creates a commotion, but finally, Marcelle having proven herself such an admirable wife. Tom for gives her her past and they live happily ever after-

"Girl in the Spotlight"—National.

At the New National tonight, Victor Herbert's latest nusical comedy success "The Girl in the Spotlight" will begin a week's engagement. George W. Lederer a company of players each of whom has won a name in the theatrical world. Among them are Hal Skelley late of "The Night Boat" and formerly of "Fiddlers Three" "Flo Flo" and other big musical hits; Mary Milburn a new prima donna who has won a name quicker than probably any other prima donns in ears; Minerva Grey last seen here in "Angel Face Eunice Sauvain, and two score other entertainers teen numbers, fairly bubbles over with melody and several of the numbers are song hits. Mr. Victor Herbert will conduct the augmented orchestra tonight

"Way Down East"—Poli's.

D. W. Griffith's "Way Down East" will enter upon today at 3 o'clock and evening performance at 8:15.

Again, as in "The Birth of a Nation." Griffith has turned to a success of the stage for his material. This of time for more than a score of years and enjoyed an unusual appeal. Griffith has utilized it to bring orth the story of a womans' soul and thus lay bare truths as urban as Broadway and as universal as the skies. The orchestral accompaniment is said to be the most pretentious yet attempted in connection with photodrama presentation.

Vaudeville-B. F. Keith's.

The vaudeville bill at B. F. Keith's this week will nclude Dorothy Jardon, star of grand opera and the oncert stage: Masters and Kraft's Revue "On with the Dance," described as a radiant novelty displaying a clever cast, bewildering costumes and bewitching girls; Harry Tighe, the "You-All-Know-Him" comedian and Edna Leedom, in "Tidbits of Musical Comedy: Thomas F. Swift and Helon M. Kelly, popular additions. Today at 3 and 8 p. m., Pearl Regay, Mason and Keeler and last week's offering will be seen for

Vaudeville—Cosmos.

Friedlander's big musical comedy, "Extra Dry," with book by Harlan Thompson and music by Willam B. Friendlander, will be the feature at the Cosmos Theater this week. It features Jack Fairbanks, Sue Parker, Jeannette Lawrence and Lawrence Ackerland Others will be the Marconis, accordeon wizards; Wilson and Wilson in "The Bandmaster and the Coon:" Robert Henry Hodge in "Bill Blithers, Lawyer;" Leon and Mitzi, acrobatic funsters; Lawler and Little, in songs; Roscoe Arbuckle's big picture, "The Life of the Party," and the Sennet two-reeler, "The Fireside Brewer."

Vaudeville-Strand.

Beginning tomorrow and continuing through next Sunday, the photodramatic offering at the Strand Theater supersedes the vaudeville attractions, pre-senting as it does for the first time in Washington "The Stealers," William Christy Cabanne's powerful human document. An augmented orchestra will give a special interpretative score at every performance night and day. A humorous farcial oddity by Howard Clark entitled "Nine o'Clock," presented by Frank Davis, will be the feature attraction of an all-star vaudeville bill. Other numbers include Wilbur and Lyke in songs, bounds and sayings; Edah Delbridge and Tobe Greemer in song; Hart and Helene, unique exponents of music; and Billy Bernard and Charlotte Meyers, funier than ever in "The Cabby and The

"Jingle Jangle"-Gayety.

Herk's musical burletta, "Jingle Jangle" is the atraction at the Gayety Theater this week, beginning oday. It marks the first appearance of this organzation here. Max Field and Frank Anderson are the featured comedians with the Morrissey Sisters-Stells and "Dimple"-heading the feminine contingent Other members of the cast include Harry O'Neal Loretta Ahearn, Fannie Albright, Morgan Beck and Fred Trust. Several important vaudeville specialists
will constitute supplementary features.